



Republican Policy Committee

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Majority Party Fills Gap President Clinton Ignores

S. 1635 — The 1996 Defend America Act

"Acquiring an effective global defence against ballistic missiles is therefore a matter of the greatest importance and urgency. But the risk is that thousands of people may be killed by an attack which forethought and wise preparation might have prevented."

[The Honorable Margaret Thatcher, "New Threats for Old," Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, 3/9/96.]

Currently, the United States is defenseless against even a limited ballistic missile attack, and if President Clinton has his way, this will remain the case. Today, Russia and China have ballistic missiles that can reach the United States, while a number of countries, North Korea among them, are developing long-range missiles that could reach parts of the United States in the near future. If the United States is to be defended against these current and future threats, we must start on the road to deploying a national missile defense system now.

Toward this end, Majority Leader Bob Dole and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich on March 21, 1996, introduced the Defend America Act. This legislation answers the question: "Should Americans be protected from the threat of ballistic missile attack?" with a resounding "YES."

What the Defend America Act Does

- **Sets a clear policy to deploy by the end of 2003, a National Missile Defense (NMD) system to provide a highly-effective defense of the United States against limited, unauthorized or accidental ballistic missile attacks.**
- **Requires the Secretary of Defense to develop for deployment an affordable and operationally effective NMD system by the end of 2003, but does not specify a particular architecture.**
- **Urges the President to negotiate with Russia changes to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Should these negotiations not bear fruit within one year, the legislation suggests the President and Congress consider withdrawing from the Treaty, as allowed under Article XV.**

Why the Bill is Needed

No Defense Exists Today

- While admitting that, "... we have no capability to shoot down any ballistic missiles fired at the United States" [Secretary of Defense William Perry, House National Security Committee, 3/6/96], the Clinton Administration is unwilling to deploy a system to defend the United States against existing and future ballistic missile threats.

Ballistic Missile Threats to the U.S. Are Real and Growing .

- While the most critical threat to the United States and its people is no longer a massive Soviet missile attack, equally troubling threats exist: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and accidental or unauthorized ballistic missile attacks.

Proliferation

- More than 25 countries (including North Korea, Iran, Libya, Iraq and Syria) currently possess, or are seeking to acquire, ballistic missiles that could carry nuclear, chemical and biological warheads. And those countries that already have shorter-range ballistic missiles, are seeking to acquire more sophisticated, longer-range ballistic missiles.
- For instance, North Korea's Taepo Dong 2 missile has been identified in unofficial sources as having a range between 3,500 kilometers and 10,000 kilometers, making parts of the United States vulnerable to attack. According to John Deutch, then Deputy Secretary of Defense, "If the North Koreans field the Taepo Dong 2 missile, Guam, Alaska and parts of Hawaii would potentially be at risk" [Hearing Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 8/11/94].
- Despite this acknowledgment, the Clinton Administration has quoted intelligence estimates claiming that no new ballistic missile threats to the United States will appear within the next 15 years. But this assumption is flawed for several reasons. First, this estimate deals only with the defense of the U.S. mainland, as if Alaska and Hawaii are not part of the United States.
- Second, the 15 year estimate ignores the existence of international trade. Even Secretary Perry admitted that the intelligence community's estimate "could be foreshortened if any of those nations were able ... to get direct assistance from countries that already have [such systems], either sending them missiles, selling them missiles, or giving them an important component or technology assistance" [Hearing Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 3/5/96].
- And while the [then] acting Director of Central Intelligence Admiral William Studeman claimed "... it is unlikely Pyongyang could deploy Taepo Dong 1 or Taepo Dong 2 missiles before three to five years," he also admitted that "if Pyongyang has foreshortened its development program, we could see these missiles earlier" [Hearing Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 4/3/95].

- As American cities become vulnerable to terrorist attacks or rogue states' missile threats, these weapons of mass destruction become more attractive tools for coercing and deterring the United States from protecting its interests abroad. Recently, China, through unofficial channels, threatened the use of ballistic missiles to deter U.S. action during the March 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis by claiming the United States "wouldn't dare defend Taiwan because they'd [China] rain nuclear bombs on Los Angeles." [*Associated Press*, 3/17/96.]
- President Clinton's first Director of Central Intelligence Jim Woolsey recognized the effects proliferation could have on limiting U.S. responses to regional conflicts. In recent testimony before the House National Security Committee, the former director stated: **"Ballistic missiles can, and in the future they increasingly will, be used by hostile states for blackmail, terror, and to drive wedges between us and our friends and allies. It is my judgment that the administration is not currently giving this vital problem the proper weight it deserves"** [3/14/96].

Accidental or Unauthorized Missile Attacks

- S. 1635 focuses on deterring and defending against limited, unauthorized or accidental ballistic missile attacks, a real possibility given Russia's current state of political turmoil. And this threat is heightened by China, whose command and control structure for its nuclear arsenal is an unknown commodity.

Clinton Administration Refuses to Act Despite Acknowledging the Threat

- On November 14, 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12938, "Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction," which read in part:

"I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, find that the proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons ('weapons of mass destruction') and of the means of delivering such weapons constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat."

- One year later, on November 9, 1995, President Clinton issued a "Notice of Continuation of Emergency Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction," which stated, in part:

"Because the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on November 14, 1994, must continue in effect beyond November 14, 1995."

- Yet, President Clinton vetoed the FY 1996 Defense Authorization bill because it required the deployment of a national missile defense system by 2003. The Majority party wants to defend America, now it is up to the President to support the 1996 Defend America Act.

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